29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

For dress both sexes wear a length of cotton cloth knotted on one shoulder, the left of a man, and the right of a woman, and falling to the knees. These cloths when new are a dazzling white, but they soon lose all semblance of their original purity. The male Shilluk favours red, and steeps his cloth in a dye made from brick dust which produces a russet hue; the female, alas, prefers to soak her cloth in oil which turns her lovely white robe into a dingy, evil-smelling clout.

'In the Spring,' sings the poet, 'a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love,' and this is no less true of the Shilluk youth than it is of his brother of any other race or clime. A Shilluk gallant seeking to captivate a maiden's heart is indeed a sight to see; his cloth is dyed the deepest red; his spear-blade glitters and its six-foot shaft is smooth and polished; his face is painted red and white (and in other colours, too, if he has a friend or relation who has access to the school chalk-box), with the beads of flesh across his brow pricked out in contrasting colours; he is loaded down with ropes of beads, dangling ear-rings, bracelets and anklets, so that he clanks along like a tank engine. But the most astonishing feature of his get-up is his hair. No fashionable hairdresser at home can teach the Shilluk anything about hair-styles. Nature has given him but a sparse thatch of thin, kinky hair, yet with this he produces the most amazing results. If he decides to go in for the soup-plate style, he waits until his hair has grown to a reasonable length and then puts himself in the hands of the local hairdresser who treats his locks with a mixture of mud, oil, ashes and other less pleasing ingredients before moulding them into discs on each side of the head, teasing the hair into minute curls. Sometimes the barber will shave the top of the head bare, but occasionally he will treat it with red mud and knead it into small balls like cherries, or shape it like a cock's comb or something equally fantastic. A youth who adopts this hair-style may keep it long after his courting days are over and he has settled down as a sedate husband, and in this case the two side discs, reinforced from time to time with extra supplies